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63-121

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director

-7 JAN 1963

SUBJECT : Security of Voice Communications Circuitry Between  
the White House and Nassau

REFERENCE : DDCI Memo Dated 26 December 1962, Subject as Above *ER 12 9440*

1. The reference requested that we consider an appropriate course of action for Mr. McCone to take with reference to the use of international telephone service for passing classified information between the Presidential party at Nassau and senior U.S. officials in Washington.

2. The ideal solution to this problem is to provide the whole Presidential party, including all his advisors, with encrypted telephone and teletype facilities so that the use of normal telephone service is unnecessary. In the case of Nassau, the encrypted teletype service was very good but the encrypted telephone service (KY-9) did not work because the circuitry to Nassau was not of sufficient quality to support a KY-9 communications link. This device requires circuits of very high quality which are not available through the normal communications facilities overseas.

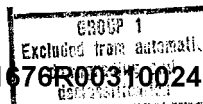
3. In discussing this problem with NSA and the White House Communications Agency, we all feel that the following represents the best course of action on this matter.

a. The long-range solution is the development of voice equipment which will work on standard international phone circuits. This is the current objective of a considerable amount of research and development effort by NSA and the military services. There is not much Mr. McCone could do to aid in this development except express an intelligence information interest in it to give those working on the problem some moral support. I'll have such a letter prepared if you so desire.

b. The White House Signal Agency normally provides on-line enciphered teletype circuitry between the White House and the Presidential party. This is available to anyone in the Presidential party. Colonel McNally, the Commanding Officer of WHSA indicates that he could extend this service on a teleconference basis to the offices of the particular Government agencies who have representation in the Presidential party provided arrangements were made for this in advance. This would provide an informal method of communications to and from the Presidential party which would be secure.

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE

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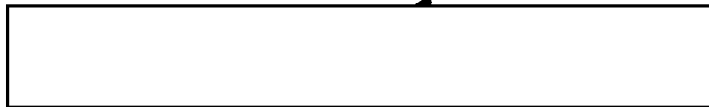


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c. The temptation to use the telephone for obtaining fast answers and to make quick decisions while a conference is in session, such as the Nassau conference, is great. About all Mr. McCone could do to limit this hazard is to request that the members of the Presidential party be cautioned about it. To emphasize this hazard Mr. McCone may wish to refer to the known Soviet COMINT collection effort which is now located in Cuba. Information about the existence of this activity is conclusive. A letter to the members of the NSC from Mr. McCone concerning this hazard would appear to be appropriate. A suggested draft of such a letter is attached.

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H. M. MCCLELLAND  
Director of Communications

Attachment:  
Draft of a Letter

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Members of the National Security Council

I am very concerned that the members of the National Security Council and their senior staff advisors be aware of the hazards to U.S. security in the use of normal telephone service for discussions of sensitive information. The numerous phone conversations between Nassau and Washington recently could be of particular danger to U.S. security.

Although we have no indications of any actual intercepts, we do know that the Soviets now have a sizable operating COMINT collection activity located in Cuba. The evidence of their efforts there comes to us from numerous sources and is very conclusive.

I would suggest you inform your senior staff members of this particular hazard and caution them to restrict the use of normal phone service to unclassified subjects. The futility of using double-talk should also be emphasized.

JOHN A. McCONE

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SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM					
UNCLASSIFIED		CONFIDENTIAL		SECRET	
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP					
TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS		
1	ER.				
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
ACTION		DIRECT REPLY		PREPARE REPLY	
APPROVAL		DISPATCH		RECOMMENDATION	
COMMENT		FILE		RETURN	
CONCURRENCE		INFORMATION		SIGNATURE	
Remarks:					
<p>This has been averted by events. In the event there is another meeting where communications are not available, we may meet again.</p>					
FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER					
FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.				DATE	
Executive Director				20 MAR 1963	
UNCLASSIFIED		CONFIDENTIAL		SECRET	